

**James Madison to Jacob Gideon, Jr., January 28, 1818. Transcription: The Writings of James Madison, ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1900-1910.**

**TO JACOB GIDEON.**

Montpellier, 28. January, 1818

Sir, —I have recd. your letter of the 19th, and in consequence of the request it makes, I send you a Copy of the 1st. Edition of the “Federalist,” with the names of the writers prefixed to their respective numbers.<sup>1</sup> Not being on the spot, when it was in

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, Vol. V., pp. 54, 55, *n*. Gideon inclosed a list of the numbers of the Federalist and requested Madison to give the names of the author of each. Madison wrote to him on February 20th:

I have recd. your letter of the 12th. You are welcome to the Copy of the Federalist sent you. If you refer to it in your proposed Edition it will be more proper to note the fact that the numbers with my name prefixed were published from a Copy containing corrections in my hand, than to use the phrase “revised & corrected by J. M” which would imply a more careful & professed revisal, than is warranted by strict truth.

You seem not rightly to have understood my remark on the circumstance of including in an Edition of the Federalist a pamphlet written by one of its authors, which had been answered in one written by another. My object was to suggest for your consideration how far it wd. be proper to insert in your Edition the former; not to suggest the insertion of both. The occasion, the plan, and the object of the Federalist, essentially distinguish it from the two pamphlets; and there may be a double incongruity in putting into the same Publication

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a work in which the two writers co-operated, and productions at once unconnected with it, and in which they are so pointedly opposed to each other.

That the motive to these observations may not be misconceived, it will not be amiss to say, that altho' I cannot at this day but be sensible that in the pamphlet under the name of Helvidius a tone is indulged which must seek an apology in impressions of the moment, and altho' in other respects it may be liable to criticisms for which the occasions are increased by the particular haste in which the several papers were written, to say nothing of inaccuracies in transcribing them for the press, yet I see no ground to be dissatisfied with the constitutional doctrine espoused, or the general scope of the reasoning used in support of it.— *Mad. MSS.*

On the same subject Madison wrote to Richard Cutts March 14:

As it appears from your letter of the 5th that Mr. Gideon adheres to his plan of publishing the 2 pamphlets in the same volumes with the Federalist, and desires a corrected Copy of the one written by me, I have thought it best to send one. Be so good as to let it be put into his hands. I have limited the corrections to errors of the press, and of the transcriber; and a few cases in which the addition of a word or two seemed to render the meaning more explicit. There are passages to which a turn a little different might have been conveniently given; particularly that speaking of treaties as laws, which might have been better guarded agst. a charge of inconsistency with the doctrine maintained on another occasion; and which probably w a have been so guarded, after the accurate investigation of the Constitutional doctrine occasioned by Mr. Jay's Treaty. The reasoning however in the pamphlet is not affected by the question of consistency; and as the Author of Pacificus is charged with the want of it, I have chosen rather, to let the passage stand as it was first published, than to give it what might be considered a retrospective meaning. Intelligent readers will be sensible that the scope of the argument did not lead to a critical attention to Constitutional doctrines properly called forth on other occasions. If you think it worth while you may give Mr. Gideon a hint of these observations.— *Mad. MSS.*

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The two pamphlets are those of Pacificus (Hamilton) and Helvidius (Madison). (See *ante*, Vol. VI., p. 138, *n.*) Gideon's edition was: "The Federalist, or the New Constitution, Written in the Year 1788, by Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Jay with an Appendix, containing the Letters of Pacificus and Helvidius, on the Proclamation of Neutrality of 1793; also, the Original Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution of the United States, with the Amendments made thereto. A New Edition. The Numbers Written by Mr. Madison Corrected by Himself. City of Washington: Printed and Published By Jacob Gideon, Jun. 1818."

TO JAMES K. PAULDING. MAD. MSS

Montpr. July 23. [1818.]

Dr Sir I return your Copy of Gideon's Edition of the Federalist, with the memorandums requested in your note of the 16th. I shall take a pleasure in adding any other circumstances which you may wish to know, and I may be able to communicate.

The following memorandum complies with Mr. Paulding's request of the 16th instant:

The papers under the title of "Federalist," and signature of "Publius" were written by A. H., J. M. & J. J. in the latter part of the year 1787. & the former part of the year 1788. The immediate object of them was to vindicate & recommend the new Constitution to the State of N. Y. whose ratification of the instrument, was doubtful, as well as important. The undertaking was proposed by A. H. (who had probably consulted Mr. Jay & others) to J. M, who agreed to take a part in it. The papers were originally addressed to the people of N. Y. under the signature of a "Citizen of N. Y." This was changed for that of "Publius" the first name of Valerius Publicola. A reason for the change was that one of the writers was not a Citizen of that State; another that the publication had diffused itself among most of the other States. The papers were first publishd. at N. Y. in a Newspaper printed by Francis Childs, at the rate during great part of the time at least of four numbers a week;

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and notwithstanding this exertion, they were not compleated till a large proportion of the States had decided on the Constitution. They were edited as soon as possible in two small vols. the preface to the 1st. vol. drawn up by Mr. H., bearing date N. York Mar. 1788. In a publication at N. Y. in 1810, entitled "the Works of A. H." is comprized an Edition of the Fedilst. in which the names of the writers are erroneously prefixed to a number of the papers. These errors are corrected in this Edition by Jacob Gideon, Jr., wch. assigns to the several Authors of the papers their respective shares in them.

TO JACOB GIDEON. MAD. MSS.

Montpellier, Aug. 20, 1818

Sir I have duly recd. your letter of the 15th inst. with the handsome copy of your edition of the "Federalist." As this replaces the Copy sent you, there is the less occasion for a return of the latter. It may be proper perhaps to observe that it is not the [only] one containing the names of the writers Correctly prefixed to their respective papers. I had a considerable time ago, at the request of particular friends, given the same advantage to their copies.

I have not yet been able to look over the passages corrected by me; but from the care you bestowed on the Edition I cannot doubt that in that instance as well as others, it is free from errors.

the Press, the errors now noted in mine were not then corrected. You will be so good as to return the 2 vols. when convenient to you.

The 2d. Edition of the Work comprised a pamphlet ascribed to one of its Authors. The pamphlet had no connection with the Plan to which the others were parties, and contains a comment on an important point in the Constitution, which was disapproved by one of them who published an answer to it.

I take the liberty of suggesting that as comparative views frequently occur in the work of the original "Articles of Confederation" and The Constitution by which it was superseded it

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might be convenient to the Reader to have the former as well as the latter prefixed to the Commentary on both.